



November 7, 2012 Meeting Minutes

Adrianne Browning*

Jason Abston

Denise Creek*

Jessica Dunnegan*

Judy Hatcher*

James Kennedy

Betty Keown

Keith Lancaster*

Don Loiacano*

Sophie McAdams*

Heather Nicklies*

Casey Scruggs*

Tanya Vincent*

Melvin Watson*

Eric Wolfe*

*--attended meeting

Staff Council meeting opened with discussion of the **spring book scholarship**. Adrianne Browning will be sending a staff-all email on Monday, December 3rd regarding the spring scholarship. Applications will be due by January 2nd and results will be announced by January 11th. The Staff Council web page will be updated to reflect the spring 2013 application start and end dates. We received \$66.16 in cash donations and \$110 from the auction at the Fall Break Brunch.

In order to increase staff readership of the minutes, we will be adding bulleted highlights from the minutes in the body of the email. We continue to seek ways to involve you in the work of the Staff Council.

Members of the **Designated Smoking Committee** met with Anita Britt, Environmental Air Quality Specialist, EHS, and Josh Twardowski, Manager of Campus Services, Sodexho, to discuss the current designated smoking areas on campus and ways Staff Council, EHS, and Sodexho can work together to make this policy and its implementation more clear and consistent. We learned that Housing & Residence Life's web site has a 30-foot buffer policy for dorms; based on air quality standards proposed by EHS and HRL's example, SC will submit a proposal to the approval board that the 30-ft buffer be instituted for all designated smoking areas. We also learned that Sodexho has already purchased urns, which can be emptied daily, for the designated areas. Apparently the current urns, which cannot be emptied, are being used as trash containers. Sodexho has also purchased new signs. Josh is also working on an interactive map that will show an up-close view of the designated area at each approved site, so smokers and non-smokers alike will know exactly where the areas are located.

Dr. Karl Laves, **WKU Ombuds Officer**, spoke at our meeting about the assistance he offers when conflicts or problems arise at work. He sends out emails twice a year to staff-all, but feels that the services he provides are not well known on campus. Here's Dr. Laves' description, taken from his web page, of his role as Ombudsman:

In short, I serve as a neutral yet supportive person helping staff members understand informal and formal steps for resolving workplace concerns. I can assist you in understanding policy and processes relevant to your situation. I can also assist you in deciding the most appropriate and applicable avenue for resolution. Our conversations are totally confidential and will not be shared with anyone. Generally speaking staff members use the ombudsperson when they are contemplating what steps to take to address difficulties in the work environment.

Issues can be varied—a conflict with or insensitivity on the part of a co-worker, or perceived unfair treatment by a supervisor. You may not be really sure you are right, but you are sure enough to be upset. Am I going to be mislabeled? Talking about issues with a neutral person, saying them out loud, helps you be more objective about your feelings.

Dr. Laves' office is in a location that handles a number of different services, so your visit would not raise questions. **This service is open to any staff member on campus, no matter the category—administrative, support, facilities, etc.** For more information, go to his web page at <http://wku.edu/hr/ombuds.php>.

Emails—Anonymous and Public

WKU discount provider—Staff Council received a request by Elli, an ADT security firm, if SC would list them as a WKU discount provider on the Staff Council web page. Before we list someone as a provider, they have to be vetted.

Food Pantry for WKU Students and Employees—Sarah Arnold is a WKU alumna who just started a food pantry. It's located in the Counseling and Testing Center in Potter Hall 409 and is open from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. on Mondays and Tuesdays. ***"The WKU food Pantry is open to WKU Students and Employees who are in need of Emergency Food Assistance, Requirements: WKU ID, Application, No Meal Plan (Or low # of meals per week), may be used 6 times per calendar year. You will receive enough food for 3 meals per day for 5 days. Variety of food to choose from."*** Contact Sarah Arnold at sarah.arnold@topper.wku.edu for more information or questions.

New DFM policies unclear or changing—Staff Council suggestion is to have all procedures in writing, not just verbally given to DFM employees at a mass meeting. Need to be followed up with a written document. We will check with Deborah Wilkins to see if these policies can be posted on the website, stuffed in DFM employees' mailboxes and emailed to employees. All current policies should be available on the website.

2012 Fall Break Brunch—it was suggested by persons not on Staff Council to have it at Preston Center again. Knowing that DUC Fresh Food will be opening in the spring of 2013, it was decided that Preston was not a viable option. We cannot have food at Preston, and if DUC Fresh Food is our location for food, we believe most people won't want to walk all the way to Preston for prizes, awards, and dancing, or karaoke, as was suggested by someone else. We will continue to explore options on campus and would appreciate staff suggestions. We also want to be sure the DJ announces the donor of all door prizes.

Keith Lancaster announced that **flu shots** are still available at Health Services. You need to get your shot prior to Thanksgiving. He also asked that we include the following in the minutes: ***"Keith Lancaster indicated that there had been some recent incidents of mail that was addressed to Health Services (WKUHS) being delivered to other departments and accidentally opened. Health Services wants to remind departments to check their mail before opening it and if it is addressed to WKUHS, to please forward it to them without opening it. If WKUHS mail opened by other WKU departments contains Protected Health Information (PHI), then a HIPAA/HITECH (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health) breach is ruled to have occurred and WKUHS must file a notification. Keith will present more information on this topic at the next Staff Council meeting."***

Our final speakers for the November meeting were **Jennifer McLeod and Tony Glisson**.

Jennifer discussed her experience at DFM and the role she is expected to play and Tony elaborated on her comments where necessary. Jennifer brought the following points before the Staff Council:

1. The difficulty of navigating a newly created position. From an employee standpoint expectations can be high and not always feasible. Takes time to work through using a proactive approach, which she used for the first four months on the job.
2. Lots of hands on with employees. Most employees have access to computers at work, but some employees don't have computers at home and don't know how to access email or any other electronic form of communication. DFM offers training for using computers and for GED

preparation. Melvin Watson made the point, however, that any time there are major changes happening, such as the reorganization of DFM, it's necessary to use paper, not electronic media.

3. DFM pays for licenses, but they are tied to WKU master licenses. They are not to be used for any other purpose, as there would be no liability insurance to use the license outside WKU. This is not a new policy. If an employee earns a new license certificate, he/she is given \$300 from WKU immediately; the following July the employee would be eligible to move to a higher position.
4. Consistency important for fairness sake. Confidentiality is very important to both Jennifer and Tony, not only ethically, but also because breaking confidence would result in the end of Jennifer's employment at WKU. Consequences are too serious to break confidence.
5. Can't always be a "yes" person and says she is very frank with answers to employee questions.
6. DFM employees are given full uniform—shirts, pants, and shoes. Grounds crew also given winter coats, work boots, gloves and scarves. All items are replaced annually and when needed.
7. Employees are given a thanksgiving turkey, treated to an annual picnic, and are eligible to be selected as employee of the month (a \$25 reward), or employee of the year (\$100 and a turkey).
8. Employees are provided with professional development opportunities through KCTCS and other professional development courses.
9. DFM employees have several options for airing concerns: EAC (Employee Advisory Council), Karl Laves (WKU Ombudsman), Jennifer McLeod, or Tony Glisson.

As part of **our fact-finding initiative regarding working conditions at DFM**, Staff Council members are conducting staff surveys with all DFM employees to see how we can help. We encourage you to include your comments on the survey. It's your opportunity to express negative **or** positive things that are happening in your area. The completed surveys will be provided to Psychology for analysis. The results will not be ready until February, due to the holiday schedule for campus. All data will be compiled into a report and submitted to Deborah Wilkins. Release date to staff undetermined at this time.

For remaining staff, we will conduct the online staff satisfaction surveys in 2013.

Our discussion about part-time employee concerns is ongoing. Don Loiacano would love to hear from more of our part-time **and** full-time staff about this issue. You can contact him at don.loiacano@wku.edu.

Please let us **continue to hear from ALL staff**, via the anonymous dropbox, directly to the Staff Council collectively, or to individual members of the Council. We need to know issues you have or believe need addressing so that we can serve you better.

Our December 5th meeting will be held at the Faculty House at 8:30 a.m. Our speaker will be Wade Pinkard from Health Services.

Meeting adjourned at noon.

FYI: Visit the Staff Council web page at <http://www.wku.edu/staffcouncil/> . It offers a wide variety of information. Click Contact Us to access an anonymous e-mail form where you can voice your concerns, questions, suggestions, and any ideas you would like Staff Council to address.

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